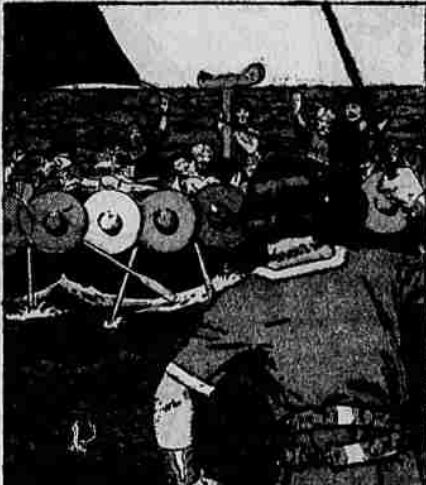


LIL ABNER

Breath of a Salesman — by **AL CAPP**



Our Story: THE SAILING SHIP STANDS OFF-SHORE, AND FROM ITS DECK PRINCE VALIANT WATCHES FOR BOLTAR'S LONG-SHIP TO RETURN FROM FILLING ITS WATER CASKS.



SOON THE TWO SHIPS ARE SAILING SIDE BY SIDE, BUT FROM THE NOISE AND CONFUSION IN BOLTAR'S SHIP IT IS QUITE EVIDENT THAT SOMETHING STRONGER THAN WATER HAS BEEN TAKEN ABOARD.



AS THEY SAIL EASTWARD MANY A CORSAIR APPROACHES, BUT THE SIGHT OF SO MANY HARDY WARRIORS IN THE DRAGONSHIP DISCOURAGES THEM.



THIS ANNOYS BOLTAR, SO, WHEN THE NEXT PIRATE SHIP PUTS OUT FROM THE AFRICAN COAST, HE HAS HIS WARRIORS HIDE BEHIND THE GUNWHALE UNTIL TIME TO GO TO WORK.



BOLTAR AND HIS WARRIORS HAD COME TO PROTECT THE ROYAL FAMILY, AND THEY GO OUT OF THEIR WAY TO DO THEIR DUTY UNTIL HIS SHIP IS HEAVY WITH THE SPOILS OF WAR. IT IS A RELIEF WHEN AT LAST THEY SEE THE TEMPLE OF APHRODITE THAT MARKS THE WESTERNMOST PART OF THE MISTY ISLES.



THE LITTLE HARBOR IS COVERED WITH FLOWERS. ALL THE BELLS ARE RINGING, BANNERS FLUTTERING AS THE QUEEN COMES HOME.



SMILING BUT ALERT, QUEEN ALETA LISTENS TO THE CHEERS OF HER PEOPLE, TRYING TO DETERMINE IF SHE STILL HOLDS THEIR LOYALTY. TO HER SURPRISE THE CHEERS ARE LOUDEST FOR HER SON, PRINCE ARN, AS HE RIDES BESIDE HIS FATHER.

NEXT WEEK—Progress.